

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 MC-02 ACDA-10 /089 W

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TAGS: PFOR, US,IS

SUBJ: BLITZER ROUND-UP

1. SUMMARY: ISRAELI WASHINGTON BASED CORRESPONDENT BLITZER APRIL 27-28 REPORTED THAT (1) U.S. SOURCES EXPECT CUT BY ONE-HALF OF ISRAELI REQUEST FOR AID; (2) DENIAL THAT LIKELY AID CUTBACKS ARE INDEED PRESSURE ON ISRAEL, AND (3) ISRAELI READINESS TO RENEW NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT ONCE WASHINGTON-JERUSALEM ATMOSPHERE IMPROVES. END SUMMARY.

2. " INFORMED AMERICAN SOURCES," ACCORDING TO WASHINGTON-BASED ISRAELI CORRESPONDENT WOLF BLITZER (JERUSALEM POST AND AL HAMISHMAR, APRIL 27) EXPECT THE ADMINISTRATION TO CUT ISRAEL'S \$2.5 BILLION MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID REQUEST, GENERALLY CONSIDERED " HIGHLY INFLATED" AND " UNREALISTIC", " PROBABLY AT LEAST 50 PERCENT ".

3. STUDIES CIRCULATING IN VARIOUS U.S. AGENCIES PROPOSE VARIOUS AID LEVELS FROM \$400 MILLION TO \$1.2 BILLION WITH SOURCES EXPECTING FINAL FIGURE TO BE AROUND THE ONE BILLION MARK. LEVEL OF AID, HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO SOURCES, WILL BE LAST ITEM ON MIDDLE EAST REASSESSMENT REVIEW TO BE CONCLUDED "BY EARLY MAY."

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4. DESPITE ASSURANCES BY ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS THAT

CUTS IN AID ARE NOT CONSIDERED " PUNISHMENT" AGAINST ISRAEL AND CUTS COULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED IN ANY CASE, ISRAELI OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON, REPORTED BLITZER, ARE DISAPPOINTED AND CLAIM THAT HIGH US OFFICIALS, INCLUDING EX-PRESIDENT NIXON DURING HIS VISIT TO ISRAEL LAST YEAR, LED ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TO BELIEVE THAT THE LARGE SUMS REQUESTED WERE INDEED REALISTIC.

5. BLITZER REPORTED THAT HIS CONGRESSIONAL SOURCES ARE RELUCTANT TO SPECULATE ON AID LEVEL FOR ISREL, BUT INDICATE IT DEPENDS ON SEVERAL FACTORS, INCLUDING AID LEVELS TO ARAB COUNTRIES AND " MOOD OF THE CONGRESS."

6 FOR APRIL 28 EDITION OF HIS PAPER, BLITZER STRESSED THAT " SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS ...HAVE BEGUN TO SPREAD THE WORD THAT AMERICA'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY REASSESSMENT IS PRIMARILY AIMED AT FINDING PROPER DIPLOMATIC OPTION FOR ADDITIONAL NEGOTIATIONS, AND NOT AS A MEANS OF PRESSURING ISRAEL INTO OFFERING MORE CONCESSIONS."

7. BLITZER REPORTED " STRONG HINTS FROM TOP ADMINISTRATION SOURCES THAT THEY WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE ISRAEL TO REOPEN BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT BY OFFERING SOME NEW PROPOSALS..." THEY BELIEVE RABIN'S GOVERNMENT "ANXIOUS TO MAINTAIN THE STEP BY STEP DIPLOMATIC PATH WITH EGYPT." MEANWHILE, BLITZER NOTES ISRAELI OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON " ARE SUGGESTING PRIVATELY THAT IF THE US WERE TO IMPROVE THE ATMOSPHERE BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND JERUSALEM...THEN ISRAEL WOULD BE PREPARED TO OFFER SOME NEW PROPOSALS."

9. CURRENT WASHINGTON " DEBATE" ON WHETHER STATE OR PENTAGON MORE FRIENDLY TO ISRAEL ALSO COVERED, ALONG WITH REPORTS THAT US MILITARY INTELLIGENCE CONCLUDE ISRAEL NOW STRONGER VIS A VIS ARABS THAN PRIOR TO OCTOBER 1973 WAR, AND NO FINAL DECISION HAS YET BEEN TAKEN ON DELIVERY OF F-1

5.

VELIOTES

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